



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

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MEXICAN CITIZEN SENTENCED TO 5 YEARS IN PRISON FOR SMUGGLING INVOLVING DEATH OF 18-YEAR-OLD GIRL

TUCSON, Ariz. – Bolivar Cerbando Morales-Galvez, 35, a citizen of Mexico, was sentenced here Tuesday by U.S. District Judge David C. Bury to five years in prison for alien smuggling involving death. Morales-Galvez had pleaded guilty on February 6, 2006 to felony charges of bringing aliens to the United States resulting in death. As part of the plea agreement, Judge Bury ordered that Morales-Galvez pay \$2,027 in restitution for the cost incurred in repatriating the girl's body back to Chiapas, Mexico for the funeral.

U.S. Attorney Paul K. Charlton said of the sentencing, "This is yet another tragic story of a life lost in the desert, another family without a daughter, and another coyote whose only care was for himself and his profit."

On July 18, 2005, a group of three illegal aliens were found near the Papago Farms area. One of them led Border Patrol Agents back to an area where they had left five additional illegal aliens, one of whom, an 18-year-old girl from Chiapas, Mexico, died from heat exposure. The group of three left the girl and the others so that they could seek help for her. Sometime after they left to get help, the girl died. Members of the two groups said that they were guided into the United States by Bolivar Cerbando Morales-Galvez, whom they knew from their hometown in Chiapas. They indicated that Morales-Galvez had abandoned the group and continued on with 12 other illegal aliens.

Border Patrol Agents later apprehended Morales-Galvez, along with 12 other illegal aliens. The defendant was their guide all the way from Chiapas and each alien was to pay him \$750 to be smuggled into the United States. Some members of the group were uncles of the girl and a fiancé. The members of the group had begged Morales-Galvez to use his cell phone to call for help for the girl but he claimed that the cell phone would not get a signal in the desert.

Morales-Galvez threatened one member of the group that if he told anyone his identity, he knew where that member lived. Another member of the group had stated that Morales-Galvez had smuggled him into the U.S. four months earlier, but that they were apprehended and voluntarily returned to Mexico.

The case was investigated by U.S. Border Patrol. The prosecution was handled by Raquel Arellano, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz..

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